

Appl. No.: 09/975,089.
Amdt. Dated: 09/20/2005
Off. Act. Dated: 06/28/2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and discussion presented herein.

1. **Allowable Claims**

Applicant notes with thanks the Examiner's allowability of claims 27-49. The Examiner's objection to claims 27 and 39 is, therefore, puzzling, because those claims were deemed allowable. However, applicant has amended claims 27 and 39 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion and the Examiner's stated reasons for allowability. Thus, claims 27-49, as amended, should be allowable.

2. **Claim Objections and Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112**

Applicant also notes with thanks the Examiner's perception of patentable subject matter in claims 10-13 and 23-26.

a. **Claims 10-13.**

Claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 10, including language to overcome the objection and claim 10 has been canceled. Claims 1-9 and 11-13 are thus rendered allowable.

b. **Claims 23-26.**

Claim 23 has been rewritten to include all the limitations of claim 1 and to overcome both the objection thereto and rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Specifically, both a deleting step and a maintaining step are now included in claim 23, providing antecedent basis for "said deleting step" in claim 23 and "said maintaining step" in claim 24. Claims 23-26 should now be in allowable form.

3. **Canceled Claims.**

As noted hereinabove, claim 10 has been canceled. Claims 14-22 have also been canceled.

4. **Amendments Made Without Prejudice or Estoppel.**

Applicants have made these amendments in order to expedite allowance of the

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currently pending subject matter. However, Applicants do not acquiesce in the original ground for rejection with respect to the original form of these claims. These amendments have been made without any prejudice, waiver, or estoppel, and without forfeiture or dedication to the public, with respect to the original subject matter of the claims as originally filed or in their form immediately preceding these amendments. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original scope of these claims in the future, such as through continuation practice for example.

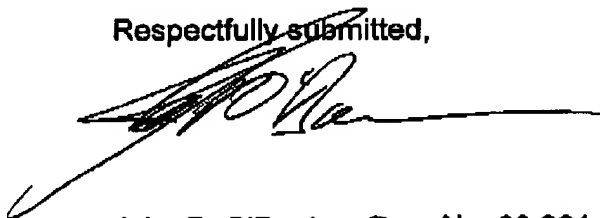
5. Conclusion.

Based on the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the various grounds for rejection in the Office Action be reconsidered and withdrawn with respect to the presently amended form of the claims, and that a Notice of Allowance be issued for the present Application to pass to issuance.

In the event any further matters remain at issue with respect to the present Application, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner please contact the undersigned below at the telephone number indicated in order to discuss such matter prior to the next action on the merits of this Application.

Date: 9/27/05

Respectfully submitted,



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